



# Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Management Plan

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Public Meeting #2  
March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022



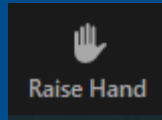
# In Person Meeting Participation

1. Reminder that the meeting is being recorded.
2. If you would like to speak, please use the microphone to provide comment or ask a question.



# Virtual Meeting Participation

1. Attendees are muted by default.
2. If you'd like to speak, please click or tap the "Raise Hand" button at the bottom of your screen and wait to be called on. Those dialing in by telephone can raise their hand by dialing \*9.



Connecting by  
Phone?



\*9 to raise hand

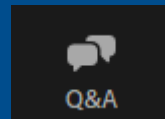
3. After you've been called on, click or tap the "Unmute" button to speak. Those dialing in by phone can unmute by dialing \*6.



\*6 to unmute



4. If you'd like to write in a question or comment instead, please click or tap the Q&A button to submit your question.





# Polling Participation

1. To join the polling  
[pollev.com/vhbpolls501](https://pollev.com/vhbpolls501)
2. Text VHBPOLLS501 to 22333



🌐 When poll is active, respond at **pollev.com/vhbpolls501**

📱 Text **VHBPOLLS501** to **22333** once to join

# What town are you from?

St. Johnsbury  
Danville  
Walden  
Cabot  
Stannard  
Greensboro  
Hardwick  
Wolcott  
Hyde Park  
Morristown  
Johnson  
Cambridge  
Fletcher  
Bakersfield  
Fairfield  
Sheldon  
Highgate  
Swanton  
Other



# Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- LVRT Construction Update
- Stakeholder Outreach & Input
- Draft Vision & Goals
- Development of the Management Plan
- Next Steps

# Welcome & Introductions





# Management Plan Introductions

## ■ Project Team

- **Amy Bell** | VTrans Project Manager
- **Jacqui DeMent** | VTrans
- **David Saladino** | VHB
- **Karen Sentoff** | VHB
- **Elisabeth Sundberg** | VHB

## ■ VTrans Rail Trail Manager

- **Jackie Cassino**

## ■ Stakeholder Group

- **Michele Boomhower** | VTrans Director of Policy & Planning
- **Jon Kaplan** | VTrans Bicycle & Pedestrian Program Manager
- **Joel Perrigo** | VTrans LVRT Construction Project Manager
- **Mark Fitzgerald** | VTrans Rail Property Management Section Chief
- **Ken Brown** | Vermont Association of Snow Travelers
- **Dan Delabruere** | VTrans Rail & Aviation Bureau Director
- **Nate Formalarie** | Department of Tourism and Marketing
- **Rob Moore** | Lamoille County Planning Commission
- **David Snedeker** | Northeastern Vermont Development Association
- **Bethany Remmers** | Northwest Regional Planning Commission
- **Nancy Banks / Carol Hodges** | Friends of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail





# LVRT Management Plan

- Trail Completion in Fall of 2022
- Existing VAST Management Plan adopted in 2016
- Management responsibilities shifting from VAST to VTrans on July 1, 2022
- Management Plan needed to:
  1. Describe a cohesive vision for the completed trail
  2. Identify long-range strategies for the management, maintenance, and operations of the trail
  3. Support opportunities for community economic development efforts along the LVRT
  4. Provide a model Management Plan framework for the management of other rail trails in Vermont

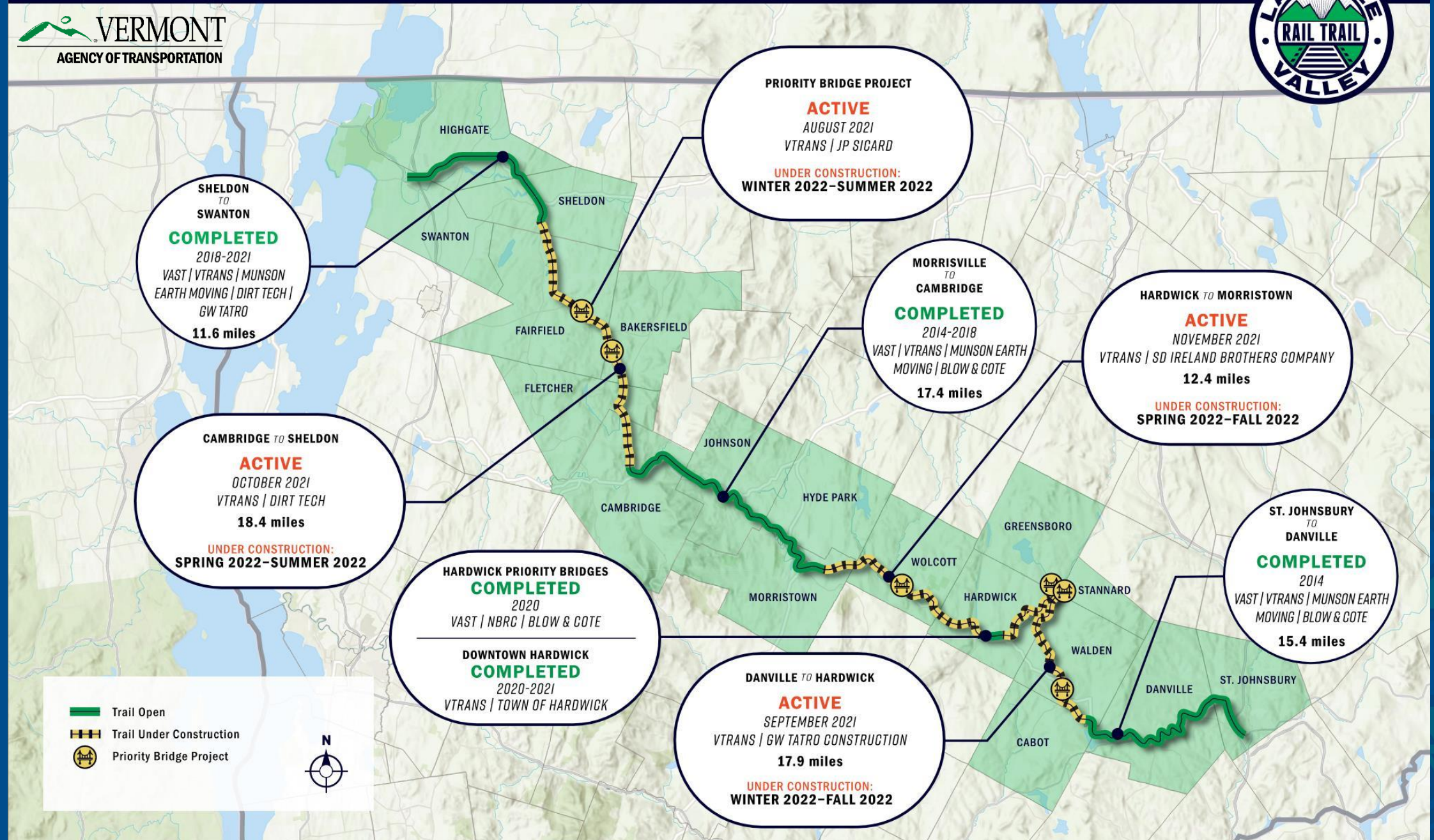
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# Construction Update





# Trail Construction Update







# Trail Construction Update

Projects-Segments	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>St. Johnsbury TO Danville</b> 15.4 MILES	<b>Completed by VAST/VTrans</b> Munson Earth Moving   Blow & Cote								
<b>Danville TO Hardwick</b> 17.9 MILES						Awarded: GW Tatro Construction, September '21 Under Construction		<b>ACTIVE   VTrans</b>	
<b>Hardwick TO Morristown</b> 12.4 MILES							Awarded: SD Ireland, November '21 Under Construction		<b>ACTIVE   VTrans</b>
<b>Morristown TO Cambridge</b> 17.4 MILES			<b>Completed by VAST/VTrans</b> Munson Earth Moving   Blow & Cote						
<b>Cambridge TO Sheldon</b> 18.4 MILES						Awarded: Dirt Tech Company, October '21 Under Construction		<b>ACTIVE   VTrans</b>	
<b>Sheldon TO Sheldon Junction</b> 1.5 MILES					<b>Completed by VAST/VTrans</b> Munson Earth Moving				
<b>Sheldon Junction TO Highgate</b> 6.2 MILES							<b>Completed by VAST/VTrans</b> Dirt Tech		
<b>Highgate TO Swanton</b> 3.9 MILES							<b>Completed by VAST/VTrans</b> GW Tatro		
<b>Priority Bridges Project</b>						Awarded: JP Sicard, August '21 Under Construction		<b>ACTIVE   VTrans</b>	



# Trail Construction Update



**LVRT(10)** – Bridge project; Contract awarded to J. P. Sicard, Inc. Construction contract amount: \$3,472,258.50. Completion date August 31, 2022.

**LVRT(11)** – Sheldon Jct. to Cambridge; Contract awarded to Dirt Tech Company, LLC. Construction contract amount: \$2,476,651.15. Completion date November 12, 2022.

**LVRT(12)** – Morrisville to Hardwick; Contract awarded to S. D. Ireland Construction. Construction contract amount: \$6,986,878.50. Completion date November 10, 2022.

**LVRT(13)** – Hardwick to West Danville (Joes Pond); Contract Awarded to G. W. Tatro Construction, Inc. Construction contract amount: \$2,254,046.00. Completion date November 12, 2022





## What it IS



- Review of best practices from other trail systems throughout the country.
- Recommendations for a cohesive set of off-facility signs including how to find the trail from the State Highway and Local Roads and on-trail signs including mile markers, town lines, and geographic destinations.
- Solicitation of input from RPC's, VAST, VTrans and other important stakeholders.
- Development of plans, specifications and an estimate for this project be bid



## What it is **NOT**

- Temporary traffic control during construction
- Signs pointing users to individual businesses, services or attractions.
- Interpretive signage detailing features of historic or environmental significance along the trail.





## Timeline

- Complete review, outreach and development of plans, specifications and estimate Fall of 2022.
- Bid for construction Winter 2022/Spring 2023.
- Construction begins Spring 2023.

# Existing Conditions





# Existing Conditions Assessment

- Historic Context
- Corridor Inventory
- LVRT Management Overview
- Existing Document Review
- Funding Sources
- Best Practices Review
  - Trail Management
  - Maintenance & Operations
  - Economic Development

## 2

### DRAFT Existing Conditions

The Existing Conditions section summarizes the current state of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) providing background on the history of the corridor, a brief inventory of the corridor assets and features, a summary of the previous management structure, a review of relevant plans and policies, and existing and potential funding sources.

#### HISTORIC CONTEXT

The LVRT has a unique history and has changed significantly since its original development in 1877. A brief history of the trail as an operational railroad transporting freight and passengers, the path taken to transition the corridor to a rail trail, and the trail today as it connects with local communities are summarized below.

#### Railroad History

The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail occupies the former railroad corridor from St. Johnsbury to Swanton. The initial development of the railroad was championed by Horace Fairbanks, one of Vermont's wealthiest citizens, who developed an interest in railroads and proposed the line as an attempt to capitalize on commercial development that neighboring railways were bringing into the area. Contracts were secured by December of 1869 and construction was completed by June 1877. The line was originally known as the Vermont Division of the Portland & Ogdensburg Railroad which connected Portland, Maine with Ogdensburg, New York and points west. There was also a connection to Burlington along the Burlington and Lamoille railroad at Cambridge Junction. Over the years, the railroad operated under various management and names. In 1880, the railroad faced financial struggles and the line was reorganized as the St. Johnsbury and Lake Champlain Railroad (St. J & L.C.). In 1892, a spur line called the Granite Branch was extended from Hardwick to Woodbury to serve the granite industry in that town.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, freight and local passenger service sustained the rail line. Freight included asbestos, limestone, gravel, grain feed, lumber, and Christmas trees. Refrigerated rail cars allowed for the transport of milk and other dairy products but was not enough to make the line profitable. In the early decades, the line also transported passengers

# Stakeholder Outreach & Input









# Public Input to Date

- Public Meeting #1 | January 25, 2022
- Stakeholder Group Interviews (5) | February – March 2022
- Stakeholder Committee | March 4, 2022
- Website & Web Map | Ongoing



# Stakeholder Sessions

- 5 Groups
- February – March 2022
  - Northeast Region
  - Lamoille County Region
  - Northwest Region
  - Outdoor Recreation and Transportation Organizations & Businesses
  - Open Session



**START** LVRT Stakeholder Session


Welcome to the LVRT Management Plan Stakeholder Session for the Northeast Region!

Meeting Goal:  
Gather insights, ideas and concerns regarding the long term management of the 93-mile trail system.

Purpose of the Management Plan:  
- Describe a cohesive vision for the completed trail  
- Identify long-range strategies for the management, maintenance, and operations of the trail  
- Support opportunities for community economic development efforts along the trail and in trailside communities  
- Provide a framework for management of other rail trails in Vermont

**Background**

- Railroad built in 1877
- Railbanking approved in 2004
- VAST began rehabilitation of the corridor in 2006
- 2013-2018 VAST completed 33 miles of trail
- In 2018 VTrans assumed responsibility for construction of remaining segments
- July 1, 2022 the management shifts to VTrans
- Completion of the trail Fall 2022
- Corridor spans across 5 counties connecting 18 towns
- Once complete, the trail will be the longest rail trail in New England



**Introductions**

Please introduce yourself

- What is your name?
- What organization do you represent?
- What do you look forward to most regarding the completed LVRT?

David Snedeker Executive Director NVDA	Eric Benick Hardwick Selectboard Recreation Committee	Geoff Senneker Hardwick Community Development Coordinator	Dan Prud'homme Greenboro Planning Commission	Randolph Wilson Walden Selectboard	Ran Lindsay Danville Selectboard	Senator Jane Kitchel NVDA Board
Chad Whitehead St. Johnsbury Town Manager	Joe Karpman St. Johnsbury Aust. Town Manager	Joe Pile St. Johnsbury Academy Director/Head of VT Chamber of Commerce	Marie Rosemond Canaan Director/Head of VT Chamber of Commerce	Gillian Senneker St. Johnsbury Downtown Coordinator	Shirley MacCann Hardwick Recreation Committee	David Upson Hardwick Town Manager

**1**

When construction on the trail is complete, what is the one project/improvement/enhancement you see as most critical to your community?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**2**

What do you anticipate being a barrier to your community using the trail or benefiting from users on the trail?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**3**

Are there projects/improvements/enhancements that your community has planned for in anticipation of the trail being complete?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**4**

What concerns you the most about the completed trail? Are there issues you anticipate for your community?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**5**

Are there programs, educational opportunities, or events related to the trail that your community has planned for or you would like to see?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**6**

Is there anything else we should know or that you wish we had asked about?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Idea Prioritization**


**FINISH**

Please reach out to us with any ideas, questions, or concerns.

Website: <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/lvrt/>

Contact Info:  
Elisabeth Sundberg  
[esundberg@vthb.com](mailto:esundberg@vthb.com)

Crowdsource Input Tool







# Crowdsource Input Tool

LVRT Issues & Opportunities Feedback

Sign In ?

LVRT Comments

+ Add Comment

With a rail trail of this length it will be a desti...6♥

It might be a good idea to stress the opportu...4♥

The Sheldon junction connecting the MVRT a...4♥

Ongoing efforts to control invasive Japanese...3♥

With all the varied users, it makes sense for ...2♥

Public Bicycle Repair Station1♥

Highly suggest the trail be paved because it ...1♥

It would be wonderful to connect this to the ...1♥

Add signage for Cambridge Greenway0♥

Informal Parking- Approx. 6 spots0♥

Formal Parking- Approx 50 spots0♥

Possible site for restored bridge to connect L...0♥

# Draft Vision & Goals





# Relationship of Vision, Goals, & Objectives

**Vision:** The *vision* is a concise statement that paints a picture of the desired future for the trail.

**Goals:** The *goals* support the vision and lay out desired long-range outcomes to be achieved by the plan.

**Objective:** The *objectives* are defined outcomes that support their respective goal.

**Vision:** The Vision for the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail is a year-round, well-maintained, multiuse recreation and alternative transportation corridor that supports economic vitality, fosters community connections, and promotes healthy lifestyles across scenic, northern Vermont.

**Goal:** Support the economic vitality of northern Vermont communities

Goal 2

**Objective:** Promote LVRT locally and regionally to draw visitors to the trail and trailside communities

Objective 2

Objective 1

Objective 2

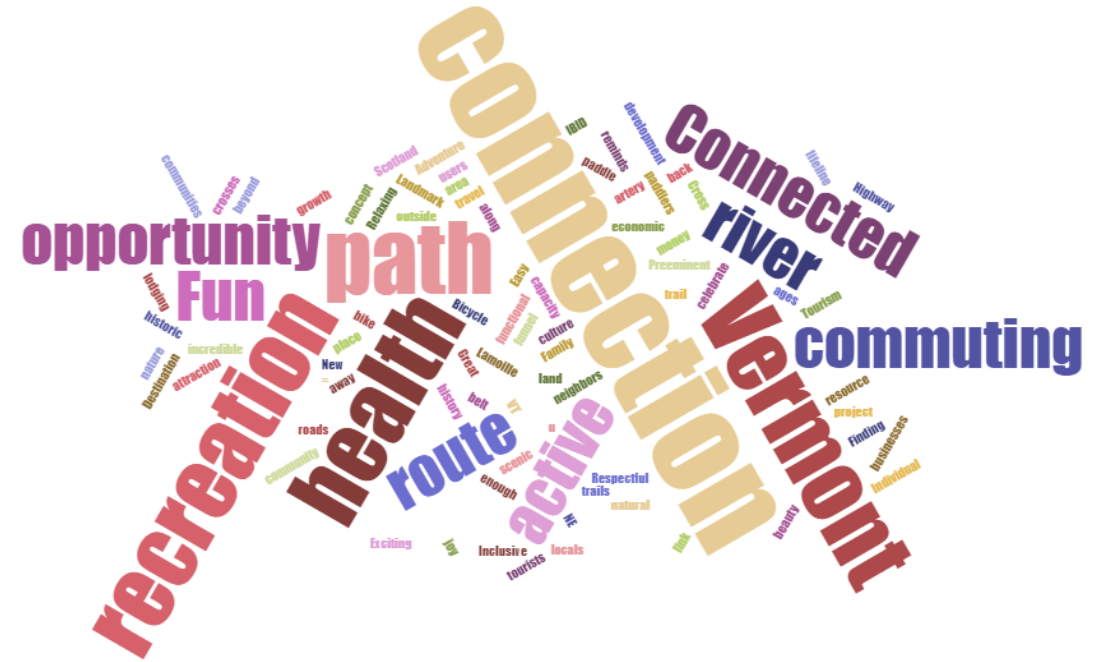
**Strategy:** Develop regional marketing package targeting out of state visitors

Strategy/Action 1.2



# DRAFT Vision Statement

The Vision for the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail is a year-round, multiuse recreation and alternative transportation corridor that is well-maintained and supports economic vitality, fosters community connections, and promotes healthy lifestyles across scenic, northern Vermont.







# DRAFT Goals



## Support the economic vitality of northern Vermont communities

Promote LVRT locally and regionally to draw visitors to the trail and trailside communities

Improve connections to villages and town centers to encourage exploration of trailside communities

Complement existing economic development plans in trailside communities



## Cultivate community and culture along the trail and in trailside communities

Foster trail stewardship opportunities to promote sense of community pride

Encourage inclusive and respectful trail use

Promote rural heritage, history, and educational programming



## Promote healthy and connected communities

Encourage healthy and active lifestyles

Provide meaningful opportunities for connection with the scenic, natural, and agricultural landscape

Promote development and improve connections to recreational opportunities proximate to the LVRT

Improve connections to alternative transportation networks and trail systems



## Preserve the corridor and maintain trail condition

Provide for routine asset condition assessment, maintenance, and preservation activities

Support well-maintained facilities for health and safety

Provide convenient trail access points along the LVRT with clear directional signage and well-maintained parking areas



## Establish a well-managed trail system

Support and coordinate proactive trail management, maintenance, and operations activities

Identify stable sources of funding for management, maintenance, operations, enhancements, and programming

# Development of the Management Plan





# Development of the Management Plan

## 1. Stakeholder Input



## 2. Summarize Input by Categories

- Recreation (26)
- Services (13)
- Trailside Amenities (13)
- Allowable Uses (13)
- Maintenance (13)

- Safety (10)
- Culture (9)
- Trans. Connections (8)
- Access / Trailheads (7)
- Health (6)

- Accessibility / Inclusivity (5)
- Town Centers / Villages (5)
- Construction (5)
- 30 Additional Comments

## 3. Screen Ideas through Vision & Goals

**VISION & GOALS**

## 4. Develop Recommendations



**Management**



**Maintenance &  
Operations**



**Economic Development &  
Community Connections**



# Management

- Define Roles & Responsibilities
- Policies and Procedures
  - Planning & Budgeting
  - Right-of-Way Use Agreements
  - Special Uses & Permits
  - Allowable Uses & User Conflicts
- Coordination of Activities & Personnel
- Coordination with municipalities, trail and volunteer organizations, RPCs, contractors, and many others.

# Maintenance & Operations

- Asset Condition Assessments
  - Frequency of asset inspection & routine maintenance
- Maintenance Plan
  - Seasonal Maintenance & Operations
    - Example: Mowing, tree clearing, surface management, grooming
  - Special Projects
    - Example: Surface management, bridge/culvert repairs, trail enhancements
- Trail Access, Trailheads, Trailside Amenities







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# Trail Access

- What **basic amenities** do you hope to see at a formal LVRT access point or trailhead?
- What additional amenities would you like to see at more significant access points and trail junctions?



# Polling Participation

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📱 Text **VHBPOLLS501** to **22333** once to join

# What basic amenities do you hope to see at a formal LVRT access point or trailhead? Please choose your top 3.

Benches

Water Fountain

Information Kiosk

Trail Map

Restrooms

Bike Racks

Shade Pavilion

Picnic Benches

Trash/Recycling Receptacles

Bike Repair / Pump Station

Pet Waste Station





# Trail Access

- What basic amenities do you hope to see at a formal LVRT access point or trailhead?
- What **additional amenities** would you like to see at more significant access points and trail junctions?



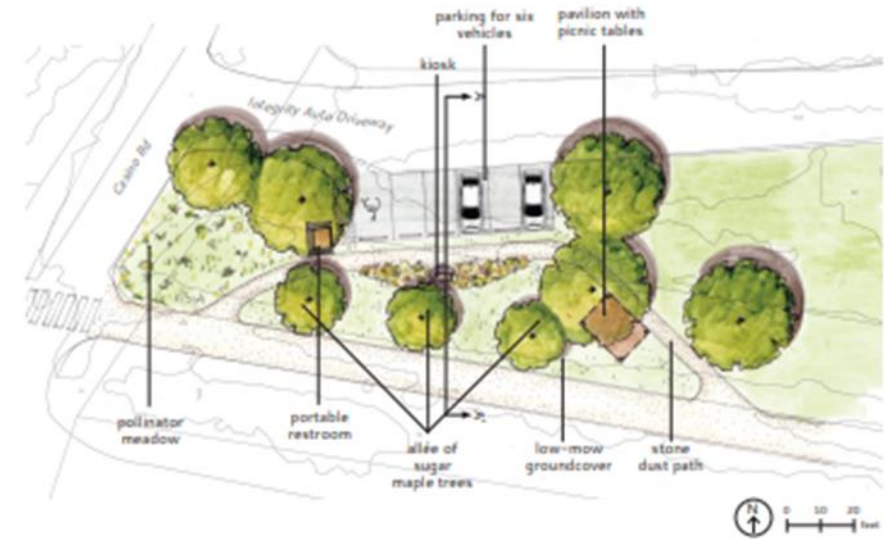


**What additional amenities would you like to see at more significant access points and trail junctions?**



# Economic Development & Community Connections

- Community Connections
  - Trailheads & Trail Access Points
  - Connecting Paths, Sidewalks, Trails
  - Wayfinding
- Trip Planning & Information Sharing
  - LVRT Website
  - Mobile Apps
- Events & Programming







# Economic Development & Community Connections

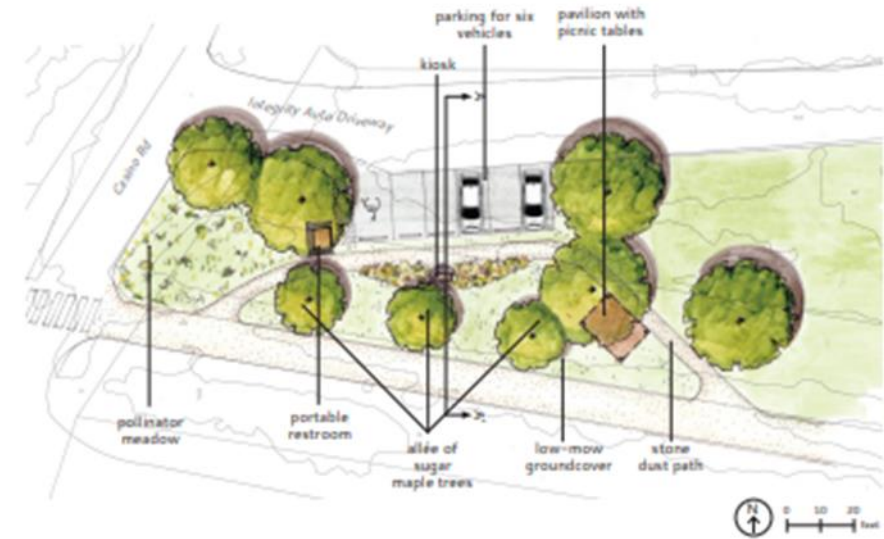
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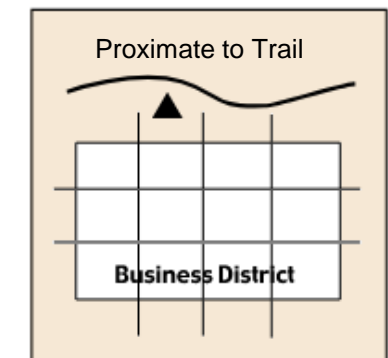
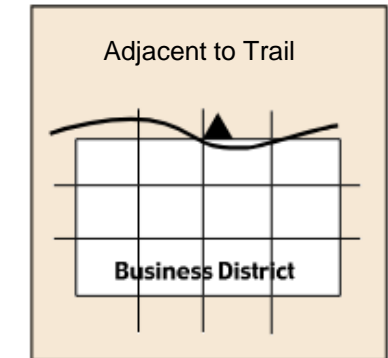
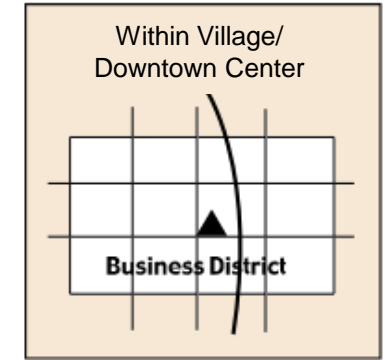
## ■ Events & Programming





# Community Connections

- 20 Village Centers or Downtown Districts along the LVRT
  - **Within Village/Downtown Center:** Trail passes directly through village/downtown center (*Sheldon, Greensboro Bend, West Danville*)
  - **Adjacent to Trail:** Trail passes within ½ mile of village/downtown center (*Highgate, Wolcott, Hardwick, Danville, Johnson, St. Johnsbury*)
  - **Proximate to Trail:** Trail passes within 2 miles of village/downtown center and/or with existing or planned connecting trails (*Fairfield, Cambridge*)



# Community Connections

- What barriers exist to getting users into trail towns?
  - Are there specific trail connections or access points that would benefit from a concept sketch?
  - *Examples: Railroad Street in Johnson, LVRT/MVRT Junction*
- What design features can be used to draw users into trail towns?

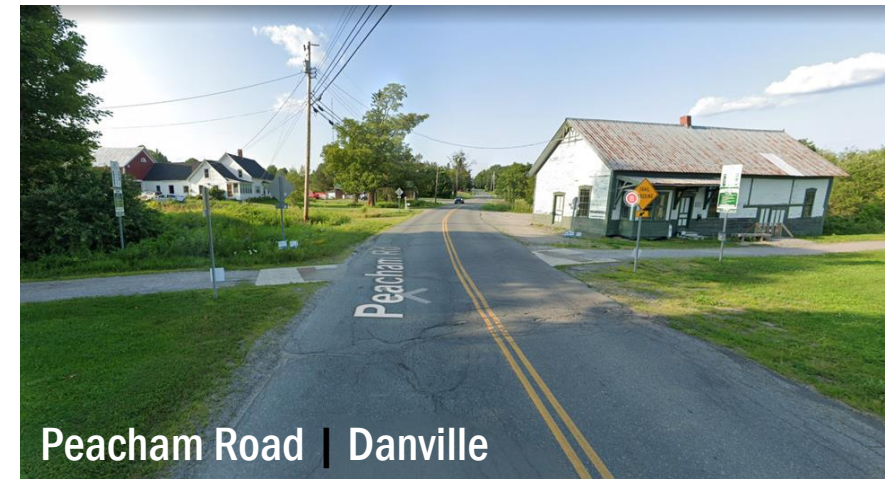


# What barriers exist to getting users into trail towns?



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**Are there specific trail connections or access points that would benefit from a concept sketch?**

# Community Connections

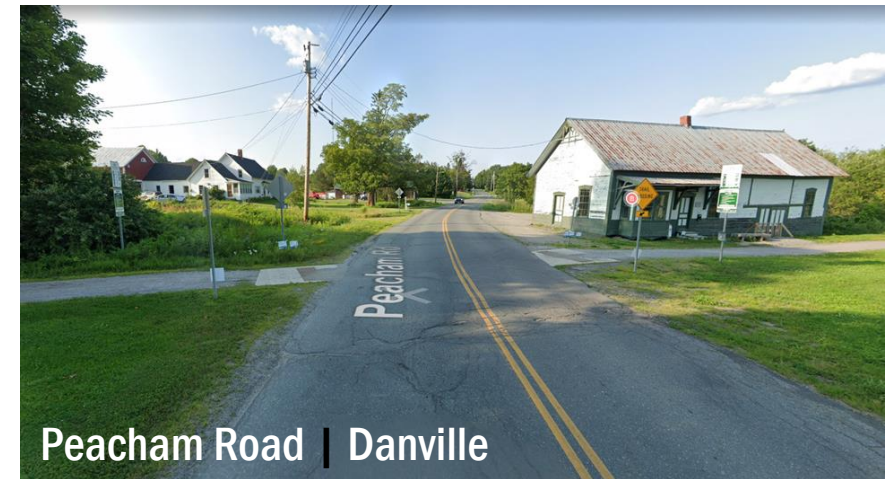
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# What design features can be used to draw users into trail towns?

# Community Connections

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# Development of the Management Plan

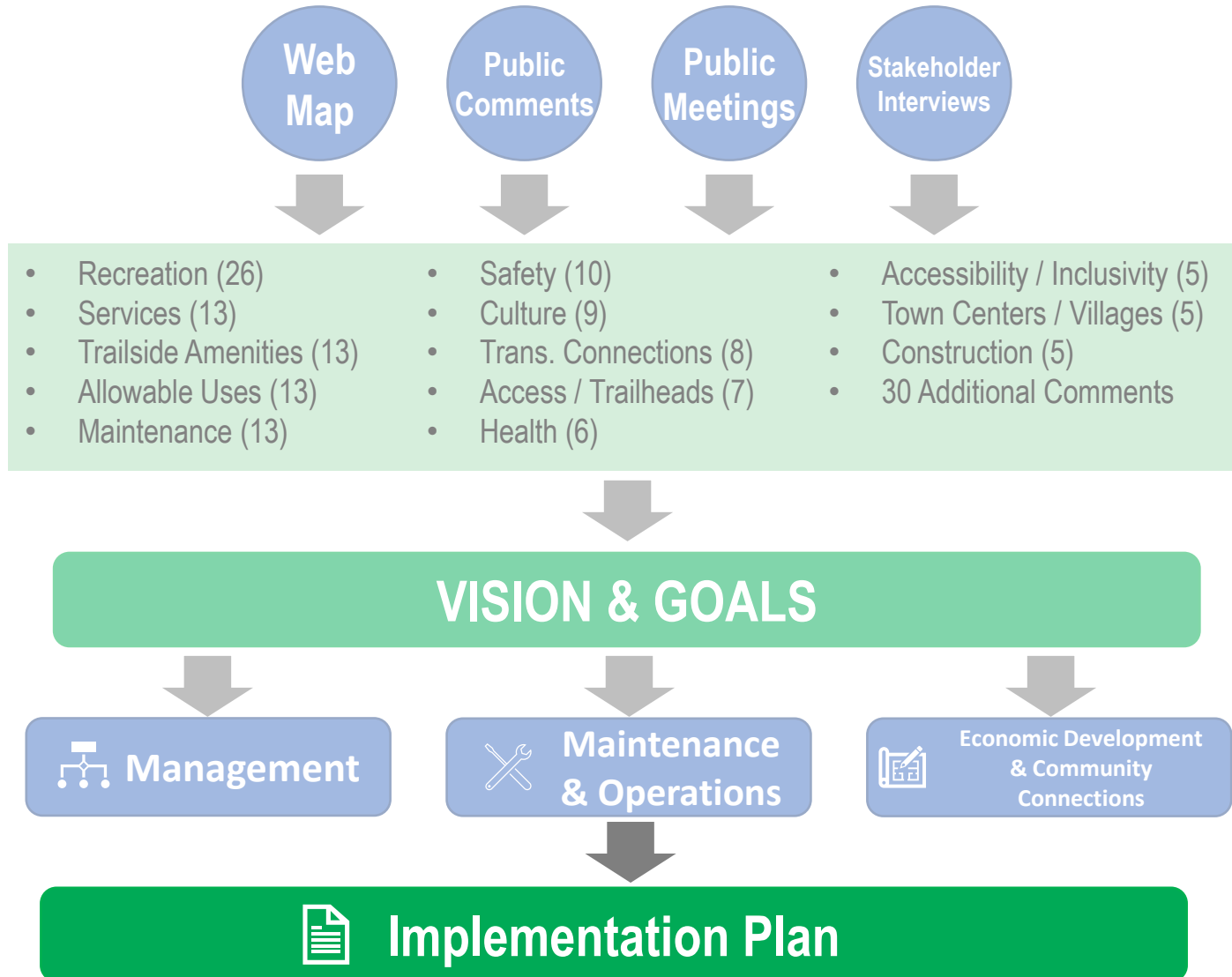
1. Stakeholder Input

2. Summarize Input by Categories

3. Screen Ideas through Vision & Goals

4. Develop Recommendations

5. Develop Implementation Plan





# Next Steps





# Next Steps

- **Gap Analysis & Needs Assessment** | April
- **Recommendations & Implementation Plan** | May
- **Public Meeting #3** | Early June TBD
- **Final Management Plan** | June / July



# Questions?

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# Keep in touch!

**Amy Bell, VTrans Project Manager**  
802-279-0783 | [amy.bell@vermont.gov](mailto:amy.bell@vermont.gov)

**Karen Sentoff, VHB**  
802-497-6130 | [ksentoff@vhb.com](mailto:ksentoff@vhb.com)

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<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/lvrt>

[Crowdsource Input Tool](#)





**Thank you!**

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